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MAYOR
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NEWS RELEASE

MAYOR, FIRE AND PROPERTY MAINTENANCE DISCUSS FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY ISSUES

Earlier today, Reading Mayor Vaughn Spencer, Fire Marshal Todd Iaeger, and Property Maintenance Division Manager Ron Natale held a joint News Conference in City Council Chambers to remind residents of fire and life safety tips they can use at home to prevent serious injury. "We're concerned about the safety of our residents," Mayor Spencer said. "The Fire Department does a great job all year reminding people to be safe, but we recently had a fire at an illegal rental property that could have burned the whole block down, and we thought this provided a good opportunity to revisit these safety issues," he added.

Fire Marshall Todd Iaeger provided a list of safety measures families can use to stay safe, and concentrated on hoarding and clutter as a potential problem for firefighters. "I know there are TV shows that glamorize this, but hoarding and clutter can create a dangerous situation for firefighters. It can block entryways and access doors that firefighters need to get to, and can cause delays in fighting a fire," Iaeger stated. He continued: "Working smoke detectors can save lives. Have a fire escape plan, and practice your escape plan. Unlike a football game, you won't have another chance next week. Also, watch cooking and candles. Cooking is the leading cause of home fires across the country."

"We need to keep the alleys free of clutter too, so the Fire Trucks can gain access to the structure," explained Ron Natale. "Illegal rental properties are a big problem in the City, and tomorrow we're going to begin placarding some of these properties," he added. Mayor Spencer finished the briefing by stating: "If you are living next to a property that is in bad shape, don't be afraid to call City Hall. That can lead to a fire that can damage your property, and jeopardize first responders who are trying to protect your family and your property."

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